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COMMONWEALTH  
WAR GRAVES  
|||||



MULAZIM AWAL  
BAZRUTA EFFENDI MURSA  
KING'S AFRICAN RIFLES  
12TH SEPTEMBER 1914

REGIMENT W.A.F.F. 15. 9  
PRIVATE FOBIE 14.  
WEST AFRICAN REGIMENT W.A.F.F.  
PRIVATE SHECKA 1  
WEST AFRICAN REGIMENT W.A.F.F.  
PRIVATE BOMA  
WEST AFRICAN REGIMENT W.A.F.F.  
DRUMMER CLABIE  
WEST AFRICAN REGIMENT W.A.F.F.  
PRIVATE ALI BANGU  
WEST AFRICAN REGIMENT W.A.F.F.  
PRIVATE BAKKEN  
WEST AFRICAN REGIMENT W.A.F.F.  
PRIVATE FODI KAM  
WEST AFRICAN REGIMENT W.A.F.F.  
CORPORAL BAI K  
GIMENT W

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NON-COMMEMORATION PROGRAMME  
ANNUAL REVIEW 2025-2026  
YEAR FIVE  
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Communications,  
Education and Engagement



**IN MEMORY OF OUR DEAR  
COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND  
SAYED JAFFER GULAMHUSSEIN  
1964 - 2026**

.....  
**THE COMMONWEALTH  
WAR GRAVES COMMISSION**  
.....

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..... CWGC's VJ Day commemorations at the Nairobi War Cemetery were graced by a veteran of the second world war Mzee Nyanjom who met with students from University of Nairobi, and the public, photo by Jackson Mwangi.



.....  
INTRODUCTION BY CLAIRE HORTON CBE  
.....

Welcome to the fifth Annual Review of our Non-Commemorations Programme. In these pages we summarise the work we've carried out from April 2025 until the end of March 2026 and share some of the progress we've made.

As a global team we are delighted by all the generous support and encouragement we continue to receive – particularly from the descendants of those not properly commemorated, as well as from educators and learners, members of the media and our own global advisory panel, who help us bring these previously forgotten stories to attention.

This year our historians can now confirm they have completed extensive research in archives across Africa, South Asia and the UK, identifying over 20,640 new names for commemoration, amongst which are 9,909 new names extracted from the Punjab Registers community engagement project. These rare records combined with Kenyan military files, previously thought not to exist have greatly deepened global understanding of this period and, crucially for us, filled major gaps in our commemorations.

Despite the successes we have had in these archives, we recognise that, as our initial programme concludes, nearly 100,000 British Empire service personnel will remain unaccounted for by name. The search for those names will continue as part of the organisation's normal activities.

In the next twelve months we will be developing a scalable commemorative marker for sites where we know burials exist but are unable to identify them. This will be a complex and ambitious project given the way landscapes have changed since the world wars, but accounting for the dead and clearly marking the forgotten spaces they occupy is very important.

During this period, our programme of marking graves is underway – our area works programme includes several headstone installations at eight sites across Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and South Africa.

Construction has begun in Freetown, Sierra Leone on a new addition to the existing memorial honouring the fallen from the Sierra Leone Carrier Corps, who were not commemorated properly. This will be the first of our memorials to feature a light beacon visible from all corners of the city.



.....  
*One of the rare records digitised in Nairobi, photo by Jackson Mwangi.*  
.....



.....  
GLOBAL  
ADVISORY PANEL  
.....



Our Global Advisory Panel, now in its fifth year, brings together specialists from public engagement, digital heritage, culture, academia, policy and public life. Their insights and perspectives help us challenge our thinking, strengthen our connections and support the wider progress of our work.

During this reporting period, panel member Professor Michèle Barrett - the academic who originally identified inequalities in the Commission's commemorations - joined a planned visit to Kenya with our operations and communications leads. She visited all our key projects, met our teams and saw firsthand how our plans to honour those whose names may never be recovered are being realised, and understood, in the context of Kenya today.

Squadron Leader (retired) Rana Chhina MBE and Maj-Gen (retired) Ali Hamid continued to play a significant role this year, offering vital insights on Indian and Pakistani interaction with commemoration and the place of historical, non-CWGC memorials across the Punjab. Both being authorities on the Indian Army in the world wars, they played an important role on the adjudication panel that allowed the Punjab Registers names to be accepted into the casualty database.

Panel members Dr Nick Westcott CMG and Professor Michèle Barrett acted as expert readers ahead of the publication of our Second World War research report, providing essential critical feedback and suggestions across drafts.

Our conversations have continued beyond the panel's formal meetings, and we are very grateful for the time and expertise members have shared. More widely, we will continue to draw on external advice through our many longstanding partners, across all our related projects.

.....  
*Heritage manager, Patrick Abungu at the Arab Rifles Memorial, Mkongani. It marks the spot where 14 men of the regiment were killed in an ambush. This site is part of our operations work.*  
.....



Top left: Heritage Supervisor Merci Gakii with Professor Michèle Barrett in Nairobi, photo by Jackson Mwangi.

Left: Research scientist and good friend of the programme, Dr Emmanuel Ndiema from the National Museums of Kenya pictured after completing field work, photo by George Hay.

Top right: Dr Gavin Rand, University of Greenwich scans an image of a village memorial in Lahore museum as part of the project to investigate the role of Punjabis in the First World War, photo by George Hay.



RESEARCH  
UPDATE

Archival papers at the Punjab  
State Archives, Lahore,  
photo George Hay



Dr George Hay,  
Official Historian,  
CWGC.

The research team has, with a few exceptions, now completed its original programme of work to explore the collections of central and significant archives in East and West Africa and India and Pakistan. To that major undertaking we have added a nearly equal number of other repositories, reacting to our findings and new leads. While none of these collections has provided a single solution to the commemorative issues known to exist, they have contributed new names for commemoration and broadened our understanding of these events.

One of the programme's key objectives from the outset has been to provide a full and accurate estimate of the number of casualties sustained by East Africans in British service during the First World War. This was in reluctant acceptance of the fact that recovering all their names would likely prove impossible. This goal was achieved in August 2025 with the publication of a peer-reviewed journal article, that brought together five years of archival research and won the Sir Michael Howard Prize - an annual award recognising the best article published in the British Journal for Military History.

The new figure this article provides (more than 88,200 carriers and soldiers) and the way it territorialises casualties, along with the detailed findings that support these conclusions, have

already changed the way we talk about the war in East Africa. Though a number can never be as meaningful as naming the dead individually, it is hoped that properly quantifying and mapping the losses across the region will help to raise awareness of this history and restore some recognition to all those who lost their lives.

Beyond this, perhaps the most significant output of the research team in 2025 was the publication in September of a major report assessing commemorative efforts during and after the Second World War. While this work demonstrated there had been no systematic exclusion from commemoration, it did, nonetheless, find five areas in which it had been inequitable, particularly for some casualties from African and Indian communities. The Commission has already responded to these findings with a commitment to continuing this redress work, now as part of its everyday activities.

THE COMMISSION HAS  
ALREADY RESPONDED  
TO THESE FINDINGS  
WITH A COMMITMENT  
TO CONTINUING  
THIS REDRESS WORK,  
NOW AS PART OF ITS  
EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES.

Research supervisor, Josephat Sande,  
has led our efforts in digitising records  
in Nairobi, photo by Jackson Mwangi.



<b>Research Area</b>	<b>Archive Research Completed</b>	<b>Research Outstanding</b>
Cyprus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyprus State Archives</li> </ul>	
Egypt		Egyptian National Library and Archives
Gambia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Archives of Gambia</li> </ul>	
Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Records Centre</li> <li>• Cape Coast, Sekondi, Tamale &amp; Kumasi Regional Archives</li> </ul>	
India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Archives</li> <li>• Regimental centre archives</li> <li>• Punjab State Archives, Chandigarh</li> <li>• Punjab State Archives, Patiala</li> <li>• Delhi State Archives</li> </ul>	
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Archives</li> <li>• KDF Archives</li> <li>• University of Nairobi Library</li> <li>• Anglican Church of Kenya archives</li> <li>• Presbyterian Church of East Africa archives</li> <li>• Kenya Railways Archives</li> <li>• Kikuyu, Enugu, Nyeri, Mombasa, Kisumu Regional Archives</li> </ul>	
Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Archives of Malawi</li> </ul>	
Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Archives of Nigeria</li> <li>• Kaduna, Ibadan and Enugu Branch Archives</li> </ul>	
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lahore Museum Library</li> <li>• Punjab State Archives, Lahore</li> </ul>	
Sierra Leone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Archives &amp; Regional Archives</li> </ul>	
Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Archives</li> <li>• National Museum and House of Culture</li> </ul>	Provincial/district archives and JWTZ military archives
Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uganda National Records Centre and Archives</li> <li>• Makerere University Archives</li> </ul>	

ISSUES OF  
NON-COMMEMORATION  
IN INDIA

Research Area	Archive Research Completed
UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birmingham University Archive</li> <li>• Bodleian Library, Oxford</li> <li>• Bristol Archive</li> <li>• British Library</li> <li>• Derbyshire Record Office</li> <li>• Durham University Archive</li> <li>• Edinburgh University Archive</li> <li>• Imperial War Museum</li> <li>• Leeds University Archive</li> <li>• Mill Hill Missionaries archives, Liverpool</li> <li>• National Archives, UK</li> <li>• National Library of Scotland</li> <li>• National Records of Scotland</li> </ul>
US	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Syracuse University Archive</li> </ul>
Zambia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Archives of Zambia</li> <li>• Livingstone Museum</li> <li>• Moto Moto Museum</li> </ul>
Zimbabwe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Archives of Zimbabwe</li> </ul>

Sampling work completed by the UK Punjab Heritage Association (UKPHA) and the University of Greenwich revealed early in the programme that some Indian Army casualties of the First World War might also be missing from CWGC commemorations. This understanding was drawn from a collection of documents held in the Lahore Museum, known as the Punjab Registers, which recorded the deaths of personnel who appeared to be absent from the CWGC's casualty database.

Subsequent research has revealed that this issue likely relates to a contemporary ruling made by the British Indian government stipulating that Indian casualties in non-operational zones within India would not be afforded war grave status. Naturally, these documents have since become an important part of the programme's efforts to restore commemorations.

Working with UKPHA, the University of Greenwich and over 30 volunteers, we have compared the data of nearly 16,000 individuals listed as dead in the Punjab Registers with the 74,000 Indian names in the CWGC casualty database for the First World War, the results underwent further quality assurance using two computer-led comparisons and were verified by an external panel of experts.

In support of this work, we travelled to Lahore, Pakistan in November 2025 to visit these records in situ and to search for supporting material held by the Punjab State Archives. This work not only sheds light on the creation of the Registers but also provided extensive insights into the local administration of the Indian Army and the role it played in the creation of village memorials that still remain across the Punjab today.

# THE SEARCH FOR NAMES – THE CASE OF THE KING’S AFRICAN RIFLES

The search for the names of those who served and died, but were never formally commemorated, has always had the highest priority within the Non-Commemoration Programme. While it has largely been accepted that we will likely never recover all of those missing from our records, the same is not true for discrete groups. One such group is the King’s African Rifles (KAR).

With origins in the late nineteenth century, the KAR went on to be the largest locally raised fighting force in

East Africa during the First World War, expanding from 2,319 men in 1914 to over 30,000 in 1918. Of these, the regiment recorded 4,237 African dead up to 14 February 1919. However, prior to the commencement of the Non-Commemoration Programme, the CWGC commemorated only 198 KAR by name, with 46 of these being British officers

Through the work of the Research team in archives in the UK and across East Africa, the total now commemorated by name exceeds 4,500. The largest collection of names was drawn from a groundbreaking partnership with the Kenya Defence Forces, drawing on an archive of attestation papers and casualty cards long thought to have been destroyed. These collections alone provided over 2,500 names and are allowing us to tell the story of those who served in more detail than has ever been possible before.

The stories and experiences recovered include individuals such as Regimental Serjeant Major George Williams DCM and

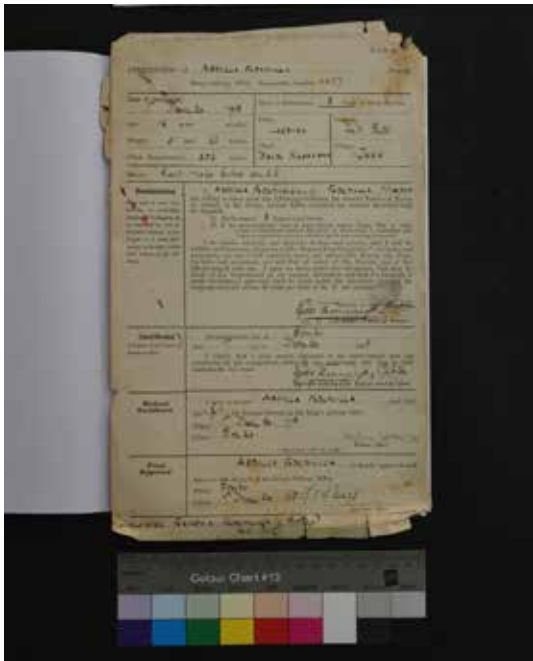
Regimental Serjeant George Williams DCM, photo credit National Army Museum.



Bar, who enlisted in 1898 and served continuously until he was killed in action on 22 July 1918 at the Battle of Namirru in Mozambique. A respected and experienced soldier, he was commended for his leadership and repeatedly recognised for acts of gallantry. In another example, Private Abdulla Fadlmulla enlisted in 1913, aged only 16, and went on to be killed in action on 17 January 1915 at Shirari Hill. Given the age recorded on his enlistment, he was no more than 18 years old when he died.

These records, and the details they provide, have allowed us to put names to men who fought and died in the battles of the East Africa Campaign, but who had only ever been referred to as casualty figures. Just as importantly, we can now connect those men to battlefields and their possible burial sites.

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A colour matching technique used to preserve the clarity of the rare records digitised in Nairobi, photo by Jackson Mwangi.

# IDENTIFYING ABANDONED EAST AFRICAN GRAVES AND UNMARKED BURIAL LOCATIONS

Continued progress was achieved this year in locating, verifying and protecting forgotten wartime burial sites across Kenya. With stronger partnerships, an expanded community engagement network and structured outreach, the project is laying important groundwork for the long-term site protection and, where possible, commemoration at individual locations.

A major enabler of this work has been the ongoing digitisation of the Kenya Defence Force (KDF) archive records, which continues to reveal new leads and previously unknown possibilities.

Key achievements include the identification or confirmation of abandoned graves at Kisii, Kerugoya Hosptial Cemetery, the Eseki/Seki River area, Ruiru, Isiolo, Marsabit, Mkongani, and Kajiado.

A gazettelement processes began for the Manyimbo Cemetery site, historically used as a carrier burial site in Mombasa.

Records also show that First World War burials took place at Inkiito (Ingito) Hill. Alongside the National Museums of Kenya, the project plans to collect comprehensive geospatial data to integrate any findings into heritage protection plans. Future work will involve community engagement to determine appropriate forms of commemoration.

This project has further strengthened relationships with local authorities, cultural institutions and community elders, whose knowledge – and oral histories – have been vital in locating long-lost sites. Most



Heritage Manager, Patrick Abungu meeting Stefano Kivindu, Assistant Chief Mkongani Location.



Our field teams in action in Kenya, photo by Gioia Shah.

# OPERATIONS UPDATE



David McDonald,  
Operational Manager  
CWGC.

Work has begun in Sierra Leone to renovate and create a new commemorative addition to Freetown Memorial. The updated memorial will now honour by name the fallen of the Sierra Leone Carrier Corps, this will include the CWGC's first laser light feature, projecting a beam of light into the sky on key commemorative dates. This year we have also agreed a design for the Arab Rifles burial ground in Mkongani, Kenya.

Through extensive archival and fieldwork investigations, we are beginning to achieve success in locating the final resting place of service personnel whose graves were not formally marked after the First World War.

This aspect of the programme's operational work is amongst the most complex challenges we face, as the number of potential burial sites is significant whilst the surviving evidence is highly fragmentary. We have planned a phased approach and this year we have made important progress in marking cases in cemeteries where evidence of a burial site and the names of the dead had become known through research and the work of our field teams.

We have now installed new headstones and memorial markers for sixty-six casualties in Kenya, Namibia, Sierra Leone, and South Africa. Further projects will commemorate 14 Nigerian casualties at Douala Cemetery in Cameroon and 24 Egyptian casualties at Haifa War Cemetery in Israel.

The team is also collaborating with local partners to protect and commemorate what are known to be First World War Carrier burial sites – such as Manyimbo Cemetery in Mombasa and Kikuyu Mission in Nairobi. By securing these sites and marking their significance, we help ensure these previously unrecorded histories are permanently recognised. To do this we are developing consistent continent-wide method typology to permanently mark these sites, and ensure their history is globally recognised.

**FOR OUR FIRST PHASE WE'VE  
PRIORITISED SITES WHERE  
WE HAVE EVIDENCE OF  
BURIALS AND THE NAMES  
OF THE DEAD ARE KNOWN.**



A newly marked grave site in Kenya for the first named case this programme became aware of – also observed to be a symbolic tribute to the many African soldiers whose names were never recorded, and may never be found, photo CWGC.

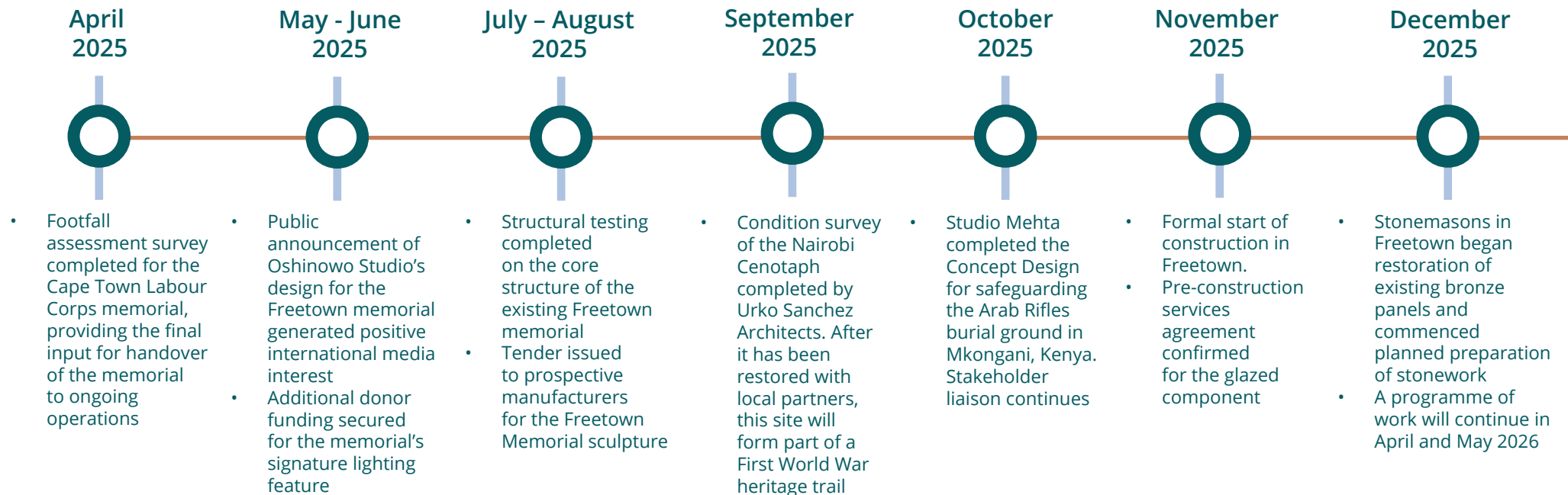
Private ALLIE MONGHERI \* Private ALI BANGURA \* Corporal ALIMANI \* Private ASUMANI \* Corporal BAI KANGHO \* Private BAKKEMA \* Private BINTI SORIE \* Private BOMA \* Private BOREE \* Sergeant BUBA SILLA \* Private BUNDU \* Private JAMES CAMPBELL \* Drummer CLABIE \* Private DANEMA \* Private FANGO SIAMA \* Private FOBIE \* Private FODI TURAY \* Private HAMILTON, GEORGE \* Private PATRICK JIBAO \* Private KABBA SEISEI \* Private KALFALLA \* Private KAMANDA \* Private SHECKA \* Private SHEKKA SAIMA \* Private SOWE MENDI \* Private TEMBE \* Private ULRICK WILLIE \* Private FODI KAMARA \* Labourer YUSSUF AHMED \* Soldier RIAD MOHAMMED AHMED \* Labourer MAHMOUD RAMADAN \* Labourer MOHAMMED ZEHHAR \* Labourer SULEIMAN GOWAA \* Labourer ABDUL MOHDI ABDALLAH \* Labourer RIZK KODR \* Labourer SHIBLY SHIBLY MOHAMMED \* Labourer IBRAHIM MOHAMMED \* Labourer TBR ABBASA \* Labourer NASAR MANAUR ABDALLA \* Labourer SEMMAIN KHALIFA \* Labourer MAHMUD DISOKIALY \* Labourer ABOUL MONSIF KHALIL \* Labourer HUSSEIN AHMED \* Labourer ADIB ALY AHMED \* Labourer RISK KHADAR HASSAN \* Labourer ABDEL MOBDI ABDEL \* Labourer SEYED MOHAMMED EL JAMEL \* Labourer ALY AHMED EL DERAMALLY \* Labourer MAHMOUD AHMED ABBAS \* Labourer BAYOME AHMED HELOWAM \* Labourer NAFAR KARA GIRGIS \* Labourer MOHAMMED YUSSEF AHMED \* Corporal FARAJ MBARAK \* Corporal MOHAMED JABIR HASSAN \* Corporal ALI MOHAMED \* PRIVATE AHMED MBARAK \* Private MUHSIN AHMED \* Private AWATH ALI \* Private ABED BIN OMAR \* Private MOHAMED BIN SALIM \* Private NASIR AHMED \* Private ABED BIN SALEH \* Private MOHAMED HASSEN \* Private SALIM SWELIM \* Private SALIM BIN SAID \* Private ZAID YAIT \* Private MOMA MEZO \* Corporal ADEYEMO \* Private ADEDEJI ILLA \* M.G.C. HASAN \* Lance Corporal JAMES BAKARE \* Private ALIEU BIDA \* Private OSHO AYEDI \* Lance Corporal DOWDU BORNU \* Private DANOLA ISSELE \* Private GARUBA KUARCH \* Private IYERI ANGWA \* Private DAWUDU MATIKALLI \* Private KRIBI YAUNDE \* Private ABENDAMA YAUNDE \* Labourer SIMON MAHABELA \* Labourer FRED JULIUS \* Labourer PETROS MATLANGE \* Labourer JAFTA LOUW \* Labourer WILLIAM MATZIZI \* Labourer CORNELIUS IRISH \* Labourer FISH MALABELETSHE \* Labourer DAVID MOLALE \* Private PETER JACOBS TAYLOR \* Labourer BEN NENI \* Labourer CHARLES SAMUELS \* Labourer FRANZ KUMALO \* Labourer HENDRIK MADDOOR \* Labourer JOHN HENRY \* Labourer JACOB KYDIE \* Labourer NATHANIEL LADIGA \* Trooper JACOBUS CHRISTIAN \* Driver WILLIAM HERBERT CROSS \* Driver JULY NZEMANKULU \* Driver MARTINES SCHEEPERS \* Driver UMFANA ZENZELE \* Constable ALEC ZONDANI \* Mulazim Awal (Lieutenant) BAZRUTA EFFENDI MURSAL

# NEW MEMORIALS AND COMMEMORATIONS

Today, the vital role played between 1914 and 23 November 1918 - when news of the Armistice finally reached East Africa – by the pan-African labour force of carriers and military labourers recruited by the British Empire, is widely acknowledged as integral to the campaigns fought across the continent. It is now well understood that the contributions of these individuals were not properly recognised.

Where we have been able to name the dead individually, we are creating memorial responses that will retrospectively honour them. Through our research, these names will be incorporated into a new generation of Memorials to the Missing, ensuring that service personnel whose lives were lost are finally acknowledged.

## TIMELINE OF PROGRESS ON OUR KEY MEMORIAL SITES





.....  
 Left: Architect for the Mkongani memorial Amar Mehta pictured in Nairobi, photo Jackson Mwangi.  
 .....

Right: Technical manager for our work department, Peter Dickerson, preparing the Freetown memorial as construction begins, photo Lansana Mansaray.



### January 2026



- Tenders completed for the manufactured components of the Freetown memorial
- A closed architectural design competition launched for Nairobi based firms to create a new First World War memorial at Kariokor Cemetery, for up to 4,000 Kenyan casualties

### February 2026



- Appointment of Nairobi based architectural practice for Kariokor Cemetery

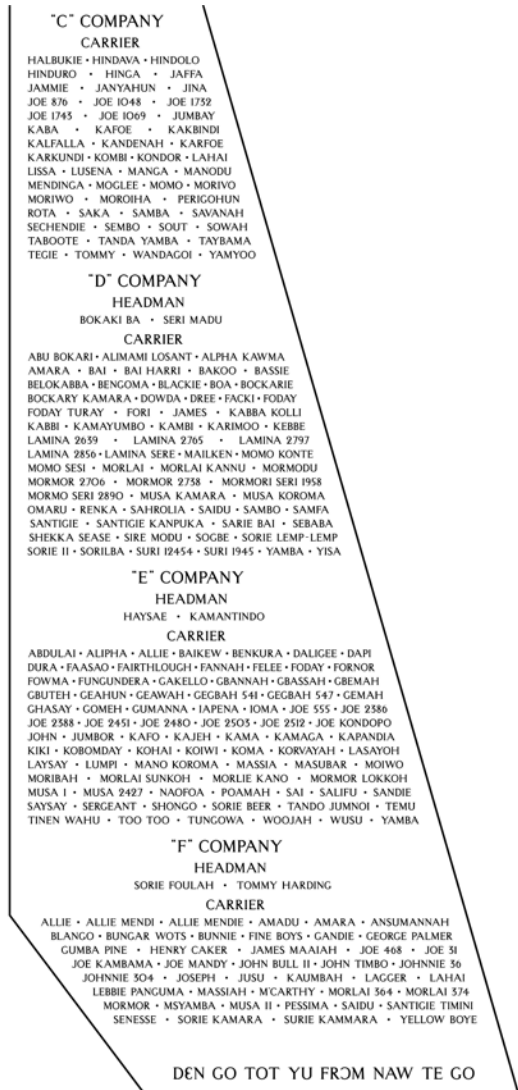
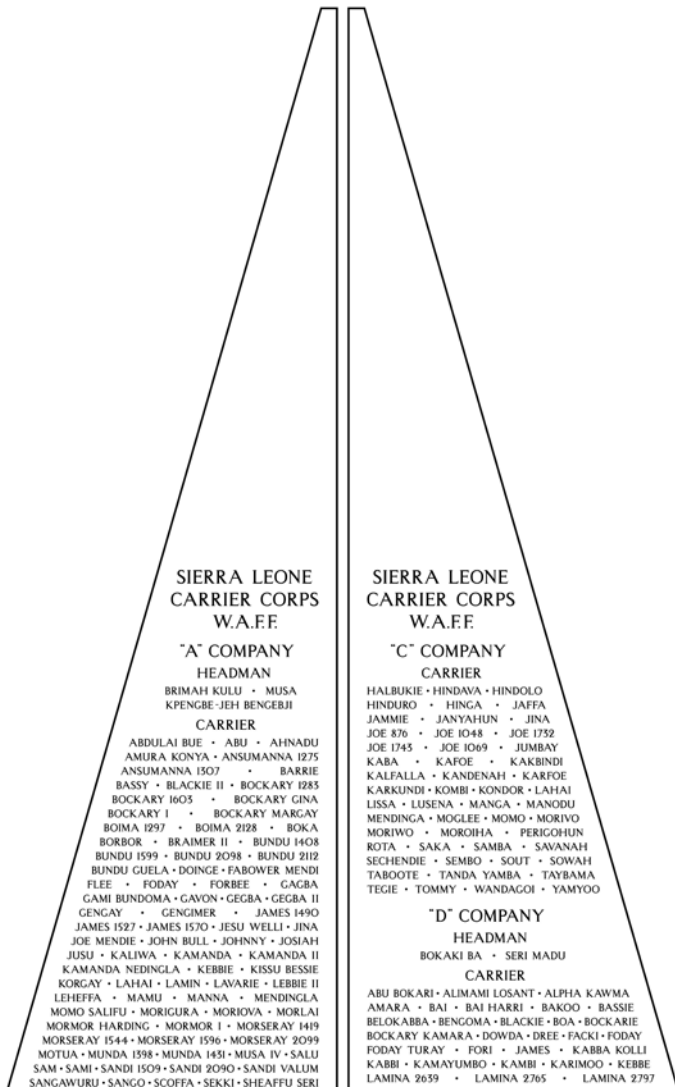
### March 2026



- Construction of the glazed and engraved memorial sculpture for Freetown begins
- Design for Mkongani, Kenya finalised and tendered
- Method in development to mark previously unrecognised sites where Carrier burials exist across Africa

# THE SIERRA LEONE CARRIER CORPS MEMORIAL

THE DESIGN THAT IS CURRENTLY BEING REALISED IS CREATED WITH A SET OF NINE-METRE-TALL GLASS PANELS AND EACH SCREEN WILL BE ETCHED WITH THE NAMES OF THE FALLEN WHOSE IDENTITIES WERE UNCOVERED THROUGH THIS PROGRAMME.



Oshinowo Studio has been leading an international team of specialists to realise our plans for a new glass sculpture to rise from the existing 1929 Sir Edwin Lutyens-designed memorial – an important site in Freetown, Sierra Leone, that has served as a primary focal point for commemorations and remembrance for decades.

In March, the studio's founder, Tosin Oshinowo told international architecture and design publication Dezeen that her core idea was to create a memorial that materially and powerfully acknowledges the Carrier Corps, who had previously gone unrecognised. The team chose to extend the original obelisk vertically in response to the relatively tight space of the site – just six by seven metres – but also to visually acknowledge that finally the men's service had risen in status.

This idea resonated with the poets chosen to write our commemorative poem, Nii Ayikwei Parkes and Julian Knox - artistically known as Julianknxx - as they approached their literary contribution. Together they

Our Drawing Office have used digital layouts to organise the names in order and align the epitaph in two languages, ready for engraving onto the glass panels.

.....  
: Director of Commemorations, Richard Hills marks National  
Remembrance Day in November 2025 at the Freetown  
Memorial in Sierra Leone, photo Freetown Media Centre.  
.....



wrote the memorial poem as an offering to the people of Sierra Leone.

The title of the poem, *borne*, speaks directly: these men who were conscripted as carriers carried more than loads. They carried histories, hopes, burdens, and futures, all without acknowledgement. A phrase from the poem will be etched alongside the names in Krio and English on the new memorial - *from today, you will be carried. you are borne, now and ever.*

The design that is currently being realised is created with a set of 5.3 metre tall glass panels and each screen will be etched with the names of the fallen whose identities were uncovered through this programme.

Oshinowo's interplay of stone and glass is intentional – stone will always convey permanence but the glass – rarely used as a primary material on a Commission memorial – evokes a more ephemeral quality which speaks to the previously forgotten nature of the service of these men. Light is also a strong design feature. The glass prism will feature LED lighting on its edges, and a laser box embedded within the structure will cast a beam of

light, visible from across the city. This is an important gesture given the site's central location and one that local heritage consultant Isatu Smith has confirmed will meet a wider stakeholder desire to commemorate beyond remembrance. The light will be switched on to mark days of national importance in the country. Construction is underway with an opening date to be announced later this year.



.....  
: Heritage consultant for the project, Isatu Smith,  
speaks at the reception to mark the start of  
construction, photo Lansana Mansaray.  
.....





.....  
*An Indian Lewis gun team engage an enemy aircraft in Mesopotamia during 1918, image IWM Q24781.*  
.....

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# REINTERPRETING THE CWGC AFRICAN MEMORIALS TO THE MISSING

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WE KNOW COMMUNITIES IN KENYA AND TANZANIA  
KNOW LITTLE ABOUT THE ORIGINS AND MEANING  
OF THESE MEMORIALS.

.....

The CWGC African Memorials to the Missing in Nairobi, Mombasa and Dar-es-Salaam were built in the late 1920s to collectively and namelessly commemorate soldiers and carriers who died in British service during the First World War. The same approach was used for the Mbala Memorial (Abercorn Memorial) in Zambia, which commemorates Zambian carriers, as well as marking the spot at which German forces ultimately surrendered in 1918.

The striking difference between these Memorials to the Missing and those the CWGC cares for elsewhere is this absence of names. There were several reasons for this omission, but at the heart of this divergence from standard IWGC practice was the inequality with which African personnel were treated in life and death during this war. Not only were their graves rarely marked by the armies in the field, but records detailing their service and death were inadequately kept.

The outcome of this inequality is not just the reduction of the African presence in the commemorative landscape, but also the erasure from public memory of these important contributions to the war effort. One of the Special Committee's 2021 recommendations was for such "historical flaws" to be addressed with full transparency, supporting the visiting public to engage with and understand the complex history these important monuments represent.

We know communities in Kenya and Tanzania know little about the origins and meaning of these memorials. We have published our 2024 Conservation Management Plan created in partnership with heritage consultants, Purcell. This plan details the history of these memorials and demonstrates the ways in which communities engage with them today.

We have drawn on this and our own research to prepare context panels for the the African memorials in Kenya, Tanzania

and Zambia, explaining their place in this history.

These panels will summarise what we have learned about the sites after five years of archival research and numerous publications. They explain why they carry no names, provide insights into service and experience, and quantify East African losses by country.



.....  
The African Memorial in central Nairobi on  
Kenyatta Avenue, photo Jackson Mwangi.  
.....

# WELCOME TO Dar es Salaam African Memorial

The First World War (1914-1918) left little of the world untouched. The Dar es Salaam African Memorial is one of three memorials that honour East Africans who died while serving with British forces in the war against Germany.

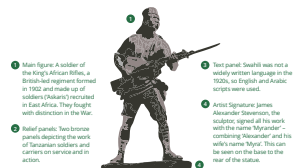
During the conflict, more than 55,000 soldiers and 650,000 non-combatant labourers were raised from across East Africa to serve alongside British Empire forces in fighting centred on present day Tanzania. Over 5,500 of those soldiers served in Tanzanian units and over 200,000 Tanzanians served as carriers. More than 5,100 soldiers died during the conflict (nearly 350 from Tanzania), but it was the porters of the Carrier Corps who suffered the worst hardships. Overburdened, ill-provisioned and often serving in unfamiliar climates, their casualty rates were considerably higher. It is believed more than 83,000 died during the war, the majority from disease. At least 27,475 of this number came from Tanzania.

Dar es Salaam was pivotal to the British war effort once captured in September 1916. The terminus of the German Central Railway and Tanzania's principal seaport, it is thought the largest carrier depot and hospital of the war in what is now Karakoo Ward. Vast quantities of supplies and tens of thousands of men flowed through the city, with the sick and injured tended to by the hospitals based here.

While it is known that thousands of East Africans died in service here during the war, most are believed to have been buried in unmarked graves in the northwest of Karakoo Market in an area that has since been developed. This memorial honours their memory, alongside those East African soldiers and carriers who died across the region whose graves and names are not known.



© NIM Q1590 Gun carriers standing in on the Karakoo, Tanzania.



- 1 Main figure: A soldier of the King's African Rifles, a British-led regiment formed in 1902 and made up of soldiers (Akanwa) recruited in East Africa. They fought with distinction in the War.
- 2 Two panels: Two bronze panels depicting the work of Tanzanian soldiers and carriers supporting the war effort in service and in action.
- 3 Two panels: Two bronze panels depicting the work of Tanzanian soldiers and carriers supporting the war effort in service and in action.
- 4 Two panels: Two bronze panels depicting the work of Tanzanian soldiers and carriers supporting the war effort in service and in action.
- 5 Two panels: Two bronze panels depicting the work of Tanzanian soldiers and carriers supporting the war effort in service and in action.

## Related sites in the vicinity

- Dar es Salaam War Cemetery**  
The cemetery contains the remains of 1,000 Commonwealth war graves and 100 unmarked graves. It was brought in from across Tanzania.
- Dar es Salaam (Ujuzi Road) Cemetery**  
This cemetery contains the remains of 1,000 Commonwealth war graves and 100 unmarked graves. It was brought in from across Tanzania.
- Pugu Road (Native Christian) Cemetery**  
This cemetery contains the remains of 1,000 Commonwealth war graves and 100 unmarked graves. It was brought in from across Tanzania.
- Karakoo Market**  
This market is the site of the main carrier depot, from which it is believed that many of the unmarked graves were brought in from across Tanzania.

# COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES

## A Wartime Hub and HQ

The centre of British operations in East Africa from 1916, tens of thousands of soldiers and carriers passed through Dar es Salaam going to and from the fighting. It played host to extensive administrative and medical facilities, with the Carrier Depot Hospital alone having capacity for up to 2,000 patients. It was also a key stopping point for hospital ships moving along the coast.



© The UK War 141/11 - Medical staff, Carrier Depot Hospital, Dar es Salaam.

Founded in 1917, we care for graves, cemeteries and memorials at over 23,000 locations in more than 150 countries and territories around the world. These sites commemorate more than 1.7 million Commonwealth dead of the two world wars. We endeavoured to do this by name in cemeteries or on memorials to the missing, honouring each casualty equally, regardless of social or military rank, ethnicity or religion. However, this was not always achieved.

## The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC)

Founded in 1917, we care for graves, cemeteries and memorials at over 23,000 locations in more than 150 countries and territories around the world. These sites commemorate more than 1.7 million Commonwealth dead of the two world wars. We endeavoured to do this by name in cemeteries or on memorials to the missing, honouring each casualty equally, regardless of social or military rank, ethnicity or religion. However, this was not always achieved.



© Dirk Debu

This memorial honours African personnel who died in the First World War but whose names are unknown. Incomplete records, discriminatory policies and colonial attitudes saw many excluded from named commemoration at the time. Where the CWGC has not been able to recover their names, we remain committed to ensuring their legacy lives on through memorials like this. If you have information that will help us to tell their stories, please share it with us.

The Mombasa African Memorial, one of the other two memorials dedicated to East African dead.



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For more information about the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, or to search our records online, visit [www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org)

# WELCOME TO Mombasa African Memorial

The First World War (1914-1918) left little of the world untouched. The Mombasa African Memorial is one of three memorials that honour East Africans who died while serving with British forces in the war against Germany.

During the conflict, more than 55,000 soldiers and 650,000 non-combatant labourers were raised from across East Africa to serve alongside British Empire forces in fighting centred on present day Tanzania. Nearly 10,000 of those soldiers served in Kenyan units and over 186,000 Kenyans served as carriers. More than 5,100 soldiers died during the conflict, including over 1,400 in Kenyan units, but it was the porters of the Carrier Corps who suffered the worst hardships. Overburdened, ill-provisioned and often serving in unfamiliar climates, their casualty rates were considerably higher. It is believed more than 83,000 died during the war, the majority from disease. At least 31,900 of this number came from Kenya.

Mombasa played a critical role in the conflict. The terminus of the Uganda Railway and home to Kenya's principal seaport, the city handled vast quantities of supplies and tens of thousands of men on their way to the fighting fronts to the south. Many of the men were later repatriated via the same routes, with the sick and injured tended to by the military hospitals also based here.

The grave locations of East Africans who died in service in Mombasa during the First World War are largely unknown, but it is believed that many lie unmarked at sites like Mnyambao Municipal Cemetery. This memorial honours their memory alongside those East Africans who died across the region whose graves and names are not known.



© NIM Q06742 Ammunition column of King's African Rifles crossing the Lurio River, Mozambique.

- 1 Intelligence Corps: These men stood ahead of the main army to gather information for their comrades.
- 2 King's African Rifles: A British-led regiment formed in 1902 and made up of soldiers (Akanwa) recruited in East Africa. They fought with distinction in the War.
- 3 Carrier Corps: Enduring harsh terrain and at times deplorable conditions, the soldiers signed all his work with the name 'Mnyambao' - combining 'Mnyambao' and his wife's name 'Mnyambao'. This can be seen on the bases of the statues.
- 4 Panel: Swahili was not widely written language in the 1920s, so English and Arabic scripts were used.
- 5 Artist Signature: James Alexander Stevenson, the sculptor, signed all his work with the name 'Mnyambao' - combining 'Mnyambao' and his wife's name 'Mnyambao'. This can be seen on the bases of the statues.

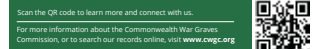


© NIM Q1700 Gun carriers standing in on the Karakoo, Tanzania.

## Related sites in the vicinity

- The Waziri Memorial**  
This memorial honours African personnel who died in the First World War but whose names are unknown. Incomplete records, discriminatory policies and colonial attitudes saw many excluded from named commemoration at the time. Where the CWGC has not been able to recover their names, we remain committed to ensuring their legacy lives on through memorials like this. If you have information that will help us to tell their stories, please share it with us.
- Mombasa (Mbaraki) Cemetery**  
This cemetery contains the remains of 1,000 Commonwealth war graves and 100 unmarked graves. It was brought in from across Tanzania.
- Mombasa (Mnyambao) War Cemetery**  
This cemetery contains the remains of 1,000 Commonwealth war graves and 100 unmarked graves. It was brought in from across Tanzania.
- Mnyambao Municipal Cemetery**  
This cemetery contains the remains of 1,000 Commonwealth war graves and 100 unmarked graves. It was brought in from across Tanzania.

## This Memorial is gazetted by



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The panels will give visitors and passers-by a new reference point that shares a complex history so the memorials can be understood by all. They will also feature in education materials and wider content.

# WELCOME TO Nairobi African Memorial

The First World War (1914-1918) left little of the world untouched. The Nairobi African Memorial is one of three memorials that honour East Africans who died while serving with British forces in the war against Germany.

During the conflict, more than 55,000 soldiers and 650,000 non-combatant labourers were raised from across East Africa to serve alongside British Empire forces in fighting centred on present day Tanzania. Nearly 10,000 of those soldiers served in Kenyan units and over 186,000 Kenyans served as carriers. More than 5,100 soldiers died during the conflict, including over 1,400 in Kenyan units, but it was the porters of the Carrier Corps who suffered the worst hardships. Overburdened, ill-provisioned and often serving in unfamiliar climates, their casualty rates were considerably higher. It is believed more than 83,000 died during the war, the majority from disease. At least 31,900 of this number came from Kenya.

Nairobi was the centre of British operations during the first half of the war before most headquarters transferred to Dar es Salaam following its capture in 1916. The old racecourse, situated in the vicinity of Karakoo, hosted one of the largest carrier depots in East Africa, with over 67,000 men registered there. Thousands of other carriers and soldiers passed through Nairobi on the Uganda Railway, with the sick and injured tended to by hospitals also based here.

The grave locations of East Africans who died in service in Nairobi during the First World War are largely unknown, but it is believed that many lie unmarked in municipal and other cemeteries. This memorial honours their memory, alongside those East Africans who died across the region whose graves and names are not known.



© NIM Q1545 - Kenyan porters of the 2nd Road Corps, Chikoko, Tanzania, January 1914

- 1 Intelligence Corps: These men stood ahead of the main army to gather information for their comrades.
- 2 King's African Rifles: A British-led regiment formed in 1902 and made up of soldiers (Akanwa) recruited in East Africa. They fought with distinction in the War.
- 3 Panel: Swahili was not widely written language in the 1920s, so English and Arabic scripts were used.
- 4 Artist Signature: James Alexander Stevenson, the sculptor, signed all his work with the name 'Mnyambao' - combining 'Mnyambao' and his wife's name 'Mnyambao'. This can be seen on the bases of the statues.
- 5 Two panels: Two bronze panels depicting the work of Tanzanian soldiers and carriers supporting the war effort in service and in action.



© Dirk Debu

## Related sites in the vicinity

- Nairobi Cemetery**  
This cemetery contains the remains of 1,000 Commonwealth war graves and 100 unmarked graves. It was brought in from across Tanzania.
- Nairobi South Cemetery**  
This cemetery contains the remains of 1,000 Commonwealth war graves and 100 unmarked graves. It was brought in from across Tanzania.
- Nairobi (Karakoo) Cemetery**  
This cemetery contains the remains of 1,000 Commonwealth war graves and 100 unmarked graves. It was brought in from across Tanzania.

## The King's African Rifles

The King's African Rifles (KAR) was the main British fighting force raised in East Africa, expanding from 2,300 soldiers in 1914 to more than 30,000 in 1918. The 3rd and 5th battalions were raised in Kenya, but the 2nd Battalion travelled from Malawi to reform and train at Nairobi before deployment. Serving throughout the war, the KAR played a significant role in the defence of Kenya as well as in operations across East Africa.



© British Archives, 2002/009/1/21/24 - Records of the 2nd Battalion KAR

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© Dirk Debu

## A Memorial Without Names

This memorial honours African personnel who died in the First World War but whose names are unknown. Incomplete records, discriminatory policies and colonial attitudes saw many excluded from named commemoration at the time. Where the CWGC has not been able to recover their names, we remain committed to ensuring their legacy lives on through memorials like this. If you have information that will help us to tell their stories, please share it with us.

The Dar es Salaam African Memorial, one of the other two memorials dedicated to East African dead.



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# WELCOME TO Mbala (Abercorn) Memorial

The First World War (1914-1918) left little of the world untouched. The Mbala (Abercorn) Memorial is one of two memorials that honour Zambians who died while serving with British forces in the war against Germany. The other is the Livingstone Camp Memorial, which commemorates soldiers of the Northern Rhodesia Police.

During the conflict, more than 650,000 non-combatant labourers were raised for the Carrier Corps from across East Africa, with over 85,000 coming from Zambia. They served alongside British Empire forces in fighting centred on present day Tanzania, where they suffered great hardship. Overburdened, ill-provisioned and often serving in unfamiliar climates, their casualty rates were considerably higher than those of soldiers serving in combat roles. It is believed more than 83,000 East African carriers died during the war, the majority from disease. This memorial states that 1,467 of these came from Zambia, although more recent estimates place this figure in excess of 4,500.

Mbala was subjected to a failed German raid in September 1914. In 1916, British forces advanced into what is now Zambia into Tanzania. After four gruelling years of fighting across East Africa, Zambia was again visited on significant events when German forces finally surrendered here at Mbala on 25 November 1918 - two weeks after the Armistice in Europe.

The graves of the Zambian carriers commemorated here are largely unknown, but it is believed that many lie unmarked in municipal and other cemeteries in Mbala and across East Africa. This memorial honours their memory, alongside other East Africans who died across the region whose graves and names are not known.



© NIM Q17112 - British South African Police march through Mbala (Port Beaufort) towards Mbala (Port Beaufort) on 25 November 1918.

## Mtengatenga



© NIM Q17078 - Transport column on the Lusitani River

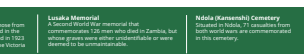


© NIM Q17102 - Women of Mombasa Port (Beaufort) unloading and loading grain for transport



© NIM Q17070 - Carriers standing on the Chibata (Port Beaufort)

It is estimated that between 15,000 and 40,000 Zambians were in constant engagement as labourers and carriers in the Livingstone Camp Memorial during the First World War. 4,000 served as military porters in the campaign fought in Tanzania and Mozambique. The death statistics during the two world wars. We endeavoured to do this by name in cemeteries or on memorials to the missing, honouring each casualty equally, regardless of social or military rank, ethnicity or religion. However, this was not always achieved.



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© Dirk Debu

## A Memorial Without Names

This memorial honours African personnel who lost their lives in the First World War, but whose names remain unknown. Incomplete wartime records, discriminatory policies and colonial attitudes saw many excluded from named commemoration at the time. Where the Commonwealth War Graves Commission has not been able to recover their names from the historical record, we remain committed to ensuring their legacy lives on through memorials like this. If you have information that will help us to tell their stories, please share it with us.

Flora showing divisions of memorial



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- Livingstone Camp Memorial**  
Over 1,000 men served with the Northern Rhodesia Police during the First World War. The memorial honours African personnel who died in service in the Northern Rhodesia Police. A memorial erected in 1922 commemorates those who were killed and those who died but whose graves are not known.
- Compass, Victoria Falls**  
A memorial honouring all those who died in service in the Northern Rhodesia Police. A memorial erected in 1922 commemorates those who were killed and those who died but whose graves are not known.
- Lusaka Memorial**  
A memorial honouring all those who died in service in the Northern Rhodesia Police. A memorial erected in 1922 commemorates those who were killed and those who died but whose graves are not known.
- Ndola (Kamohash) Cemetery**  
This cemetery contains the remains of 1,000 Commonwealth war graves and 100 unmarked graves. It was brought in from across Tanzania.

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## BRINGING COMMONWEALTH WAR HISTORY TO NEW AUDIENCES

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Education and awareness-raising initiatives linked to this programme continue to grow, especially as research and on-the-ground activity deliver tangible outcomes. What makes this progress particularly meaningful is the way in which schools, learners, universities and heritage organisations are choosing to engage – recognising this history as their own and actively taking part in the activities and events, we are providing. Our video-first approach for content is also flourishing, especially in Kenya, South Africa and

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Sierra Leone where we have worked with numerous skilled local creators and filmmakers.

In Kenya, Education Officer, Rose Maina, regularly offers tours and educational visits of our sites in Nairobi and Mombasa to schools and universities. Updated educational materials and a new heritage trail for the Nairobi War Cemetery have been created. A partnership with the East Africa Tourist Guides and Drivers Association has allowed us to further develop heritage connections in Mombasa

and Nairobi. Training programmes have been delivered to local guides in Nairobi and Mombasa, with wider supporting materials and digital content in development.

In Malawi, a heritage trail is being delivered around memorial and cemetery sites in Zomba, in collaboration with local partners. The trail will incorporate wider World War locations to offer a comprehensive historical experience. CWGC visitor information panels have been created for the King's African Rifles



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Left: Communications lead, Harriet Johnson filming our progress in Kenya with a crew, photo Jackson Mwangi.

Right: Learners use immersive headset technology to step back in time at the Cape Town Labour Corps memorial in South Africa.



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: A two-day Mombasa Heritage Tour with students from  
12 schools exploring a range of sites, including the Arab  
Rifles memorial and four CWGC sites, photo CWGC.  
.....

Memorial in Zomba, which is now the country's official commemoration point for almost 1,500 servicemen who were not originally on CWGC records.

In South Africa, our focus has been on the Cape Town Labour Corps Memorial and digital tours of the new memorial have been created in English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans. An innovative new education programme has been rolled out across the city, engaging more learners and teachers with the memorial.

Additionally, school visits continue to be supported all over the world by our staff.

Our programme, in partnership with the UK Punjabi Heritage Association to engage with South Asian communities

**IN KENYA, EDUCATION OFFICER, ROSE MAINA, REGULARLY OFFERS TOURS AND EDUCATIONAL VISITS OF OUR SITES IN NAIROBI AND MOMBASA TO SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES.**

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to share the research and digitisation plans for the Punjab Papers, goes from strength to strength. The Punjab Papers form a research archive that has been analysed and digitised in partnership with the University of Greenwich that record Indian domestic casualties of the

First World Wars who may not have been commemorated by CWGC. It is vitally important for research and sharing the story of the diverse contributions made during a conflict that was not only a European war.

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: Education officer, Rose Maina, talking to the Mkongani  
area as part of the two day Mombasa Heritage tour.  
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BURIED EASTWARD  
IN THIS CEMETERY



6 DRIVER  
**M. SCHEFFERS**  
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES  
1914-1918

BURIED EASTWARD  
IN THIS CEMETERY



21 DRIVER  
**U. ZENZELE**  
AFRICAN AMERICAN INFANTRY  
20TH SEPTEMBER 1918

BURIED EASTWARD  
IN THIS CEMETERY



10 CONSTABLE  
**A. ZONDANI**  
AFRICAN AMERICAN INFANTRY  
WITH THE 158TH INFANTRY

|||||  
COMMONWEALTH  
WAR GRAVES  
|||||

FRONT COVER

*Left: Rediscovered after a century – the grave of Sudanese King's African Rifles officer Bazruta Effendi Mursal – which was unmarked despite his service in the 1914 Kisii battles – was found at the Kisii Sports Club and has now been honoured with a headstone.  
Right: Engraving the names of West African Regiment, W.A.F.F servicemen at our headstone production unit, just outside Arras in Northern France. The factory handles work from all cemeteries in 154 countries and territories around the world, photo by Thomas Capiaux.*

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*Comrades from the South African Mounted Rifles are commemorated permanently at their final resting place at Sandfontein Cemetery, Namibia, photo Juan Maree.*

[www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org)

